

# **EXHIBIT 3**

## **Ndebele Funeral**

---

A full-length play

By Zoey Martinson

© 2010 Zoey Martinson  
339 Lincoln Place, #3i  
Brooklyn, NY 11238  
917-903-4809  
smokemirrors.co@gmail.com

## **NDEBELE FUNERAL**

Written by Zoey Martinson

All Characters are South African

**Jan**, white ( male late 20's - early 30's) sarcastic, socially awkward and enduring. After walking around all day in the hot sun he brings a familiar threat into Daweti's home.

**Thabo**, black (male late 20's - early 30's) optimistic, religious, brings light and positive energy into Daweti's home while struggling with a devastating secret.

**Daweti**, Coloured (female late 20's - early 30's), political, depressed, college educated with a dark sense of humor. Has embraced her death and using the supplies the government left for home repairs to build her coffin. She has a quick temper and is obviously struggling with tuberculosis.

Note: The play has moments where it breaks into another world that has movement, music and poetry at the same time. These moments are not Choreo-Poetry but are based in rhythm and reflect a specific type of oral storytelling in South Africa called township theatre. There are gumboot dance steps that go with the text, and must be taught to the actors (don't worry, they can be taught).

**SONGS****THULA TU - LULLABY**

Thula tu  
 thula baba  
 thula sana  
 thl'ubaba 'uzobuya ekuseni  
 (repeat)  
 Kukhw' inkanyez  
 eholel 'ubaba  
 emhole la laph'a  
 thandukuya a khona  
 (repeat)  
 Tha'a thula thula sana  
 Tha'a thula thula sana  
**Translation:**  
 hush now  
 hush now baby(boy)  
 hush now baby(girl)  
 your dad is going to come in the morning  
 there is a star that leads your dad to where  
 we are  
 hush hush hush baby

**NJALO**

uhlal'ukhala Njalo  
 Njalo  
 wena Njalo  
 wena Njalo, uhlal'ukhala (men:  
 uhlal'ukhala)  
 Njalo  
 ukhangelo uthando  
 awuthanzi bantu  
 (repeat twice)  
 Men: bangakhi wena?  
 Woman: Ngithi utuanze bangakhi wena?  
 (repeat four times)  
 Tandla diyagezana  
 (repeat four times)  
 Jeyi, Jeyi, Jeyi, Jeyi  
 Awuthanzi mnalo  
 Awuthanzi mvelo  
 Awuthanzi muntu  
 Awuthanzi mdali wakho  
 (repeat twice)  
 Men: ngubani wena?  
 Woman: Ndi utawuthanza ngubani wena?  
 (repeat twice)  
**Translation:**  
 Always, you always  
 Always, you always  
 you cry always  
 you look for love  
 you say no one loves you  
 if so, how many have loved you?  
 one hand washes the other  
 one hand washes the other  
 you don't love me  
 you don't love nature  
 you don't love anyone  
 you don't love your creator  
 so who can (will) love you?

**NDEBELE FUNERAL**

A shack in the Soweto Township near Johannesburg, South Africa (Informal Settlement in Kliptown). DAWETI (clinical stage IV AIDS, she has extrapulmonary tuberculosis, and visible sores on her body. She is physically weak, but there is a deep strength inside her bones. Every movement costs her something.) She has just finished building a wooden coffin. The coffin is not a work of good craftsmanship, but rather beat-up and rickety-looking. She has used a door as the side panel for the coffin and painted the night sky on the outside. Daweti is lying inside the coffin. The room is run down, but there is still a sense that it is someone's home. There is a mattress on the ground, a table, some crates, a tin bucket, boxes and used candles everywhere you look. There is a large amount of beer bottles under the table covered by a cloth. Trash is littered all over the room, the floorboards are exposed and there is dirt poking through. The walls are insulated with newspaper and cereal boxes, like a piece of art. There is color and beauty.

Jan knocks on the door of the shack. The door is not a real door but a piece of some scrap acting as a door; it is upstage and has a leather strap as a lock. We cannot see the person on the outside of the door, except through cracks around the door.

JAN

109 N.D. Kliptown? *(He knocks again)* Sanibona?... Hello... *(He knocks harder and the door shakes the whole shack)* Oh shit! Oops. Ummm, hello... Sanibona? Oh come on really! *(He leans on the door and starts mumbling to himself, he finally turns on his walkie talkie. There is loud static.)*

DAWETI

Come on!!! *(She moves in the coffin and the side piece facing the door falls off the coffin and her head pops out)* Shit!! *(She crawls out of the coffin, and goes to the door, peering through the cracks)* What do you want?

JAN

Ahhhh, yes, Hello! My name is Jan De Klerk. I'm with the Johannesburg Department of Housing/

DAWETI

Not interested. *(Jan peeks through a crack in the side of the door. Daweti catches him and hits the crack.)* My business.

JAN

Sorry. Jah, I'm looking for 109 N.D.? Name... ummm Daweti ummm, no that's it just Daweti.

DAWETI

Wrong stop.

JAN

Really? Fuck! Sorry. I mean could you possible direct me where I need to go.

(Pause)

DAWETI opens the door. JAN sees her and takes a step back. DAWETI tries to hide in her skin.

DAWETI

Jah, sure. You go up that hill towards Barga Hospital, take a left. Then ask some else. It is very far. Enjoy.

*(She closes the door quickly and locks it. Jan leaves. As he walks away his footsteps become a rhythm from the outside world. The rhythm combines walking and Gumboot dance.)*

Daweti picks up a nail to pound her plank back onto her coffin, the pounding sync's up with Jan's rhythm from the outside world. During the pounding Thabo comes enters the space disheveled. He is scattered, rushed and trying to shake something off. When Thabo gets to the door of the shack he joins Jan's rhythm and Gumboot. Jan, Daweti and Thabo are in their own worlds and should not interact with each other. When the rhythm comes to a climax Daweti begins to sing *(NJALO)*. Jan and Thabo join her. The lights shift, the world moves, and Thabo starts to tell the beginning of the story that has been stuck in his head.

THABO

Out of the brown dust and hopes a child was created.

A sigh

A song

A burp

A fart

*(BAM)*

Her eyes reflected the night sky, her hair was the color of moist earth, and unlike most babies she asked for nothing.

*(BAM)*

So people loved her.

She was the answer to an unheard question.

*(BAM)*

A gift to an unknown future.

And deep in her possession was a rare golden light.

*(BAM)*

He finds her, a vast stream of golden answers.

He takes a piece of her away.

He comes back for more.

*(BAM)* Taking pieces of her away

*(BAM)* The golden light dims,

*(BAM)* She lies down outside of Jo'bug and becomes the dust.

Quiet

Stillness

Shhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh

As Thabo finishes his story, Jan leaves the space and Daweti has gone back inside her coffin.

Thabo comes to the door of the shack. He peeks into a crack in the door and doesn't see Daweti. He tries to calm his nerves, takes a deep breath and wipes his brow.

Thabo bangs on the tin door of the shack.

THABO

Daweti! Open up!

Daweti opens the door of the coffin and starts to get out.

THABO

*(Banging harder)*

Daaaaweeeeeiiiiii!!

DAWETI

Stop! Stop it! You're going to bring my entire shack down!  
(*She covers the coffin quickly with a sheet, and hides the cigarette carton.*)

THABO

That's okay now!  
(*Thabo breaks the scrap tin door off the shack. The door comes off and falls into the room.*)

DAWETI

Thabo, what the hell's got into you?  
You just broke down my door, wena!

THABO

I did? Well, it was more like a piece of tin anyway.

DAWETI

Didn't you get my group email?

THABO

What email? Nobody uses email any more, everything's on twitter or facebook.

DAWETI

Facebok?

THABO

No it's not Afrikaans, Facebook? (*Daweti doesn't respond*) it's a social networking site. I have like 380 friends and/

DAWETI

Sounds complicated.

THABO

No it's easy. Well... you can have conflicts and stuff if you don't friend someone, but they send you a request. Like my co worker friended me but she is Coo coo bananas and I don't want her all up in my life, but then she got really mad cause I ignored her request and now I have to avoid her at /work...

DAWETI

Anyway if you read my email, I wrote that I did not want to be bothered these days Thabo/ so just...

THABO

You mean you plan on building the new house by yourself?

DAWETI

What house?



THABO

I saw the wood outside.

DAWETI

Those aren't mine.

THABO

Then why are they in your yard?

DAWETI

I'm keeping those things for my neighbor, Pamela.

THABO

So you're saying that all that wood out there is for Pam?

DAWETI

Yes. Now I'm busy, Thabo, so/

THABO

Then why is it that I just passed Pamela building her own brand new home, courtesy of the Department of Housing itself?

DAWETI

Oh...?

THABO

Oh, Oscar's helping her rebuild it as we speak. Now come on! I'd like to build a new home by the end of the week.

DAWETI

Hayi wena! (no you?)

THABO

Yiz'apha wena! (come here you) Let's do this!

DAWETI

I don't feel well today, Thabo. I'm not in the mood for that.

Thabo stops and looks at Daweti. He notices that she has gotten a lot worse since his last visit.

THABO

Daweti you look awful!

DAWETI

Don't be rude!

THABO

Yoh... Have you been taking your pills?

DAWETI

What pills?

THABO

What do you mean, "What pills?"! I left you money to buy medication last time I was here.

DAWETI

Did you?

THABO

What did you do with the money?

DAWETI

I had to eat. Fucking pills are expensive. You have to be big time to afford- besides we both know it's pointless at this/

THABO

It's not pointless, they come out with new medication everyday. Now instead of multiple pills it's just one pill. It's not a death sentence...

DAWETI

Thabo, look at me.

THABO

I am, and you look awful/

DAWETI

You can go now!

THABO

Yoh, come now, I didn't mean it like/

DAWETI

Come into my home, tell me I look awful? Get out!

THABO

Eh Eh, you are soooo beautiful.

DAWETI

You lie like a rug!

He tries several times to search the shack for the materials. She blocks each of his attempts by getting in his way, pulling him, etc.

Thabo makes to leave, but he pushes her out of the way instead to look upstage.

THABO

What were you doing?

DAWETI

Working out.

THABO

*(He finds cigarettes)*

And is smoking part of your cardio routine?

DAWETI

*(Grabs cigarettes)* It opens up the lungs quite nice. Now if you don't mind/

Thabo finds the wooden coffin and reveals it with a flourish by pulling the cloth off.

THABO

What's this?

DAWETI

None of your business!

THABO

Is this a/

DAWETI

It's a trunk.

THABO

Oh my God, Daweti/

DAWETI

I deserve this.

THABO

Deserve what?

DAWETI

Go home, ey?

THABO

This wood is meant to help you build a new home.

DAWETI

I'm not building a home.

THABO

Right. I'll go fetch some oil. We'll need it to treat the wood.

DAWETI

Good idea, just go and stay gone.

THABO

Yoh! What is wrong with you? Is it your medication?

DAWETI

I don't take pills for something that's incurable. I'm not a delusional optimist. Do I look like Mandela to you?

THABO

What, Mandela, delusional, No, NO, NO!

Thabo goes to the coffin and begins to kick it apart. Daweti stops him.

DAWETI

Voetsak! Stop it, would you? This is my fucking home!

THABO

This is not a home.

DAWETI

This will be, and I deserve/ a coffin

THABO

Daweti/

DAWETI

I deserve a good coffin while I'm dying/

THABO

You deserve a good roof while you're living. Let's just assume/ that...

DAWETI

I don't want to make any more assumptions, Thabo.

THABO

What do you mean, Daweti?

DAWETI

Assuming that the employment agency is going to call on me one of these days.

THABO

Everything's backed-up in this country.

DAWETI

No, this is a backwards country. Assuming that my family will write to me from Gugulethu I wait for the mailman. Nothing!

THABO

Maybe they're backed up/

DAWETI

They're backwards. I'm their daughter and they disowned me!

THABO

That was a long time ago, people were scared.

DAWETI

I was scared!

THABO

Oh, come on Daweti! Your alive right now/ so...

DAWETI

But I'm wasting my time. I'm not going to assume that I have much of it left. So can I please secure my death without you breathing down my neck?

THABO

What am I supposed to watch my friend, that I love, build a fucking/

DAWETI

This is why I didn't want you to come. / Jy moenie my hou nie... (Don't love me now...)

THABO

I can't help it Daweti. We have been friends for years. It's not a faucet, you can't turn it on and off. You are like caffeine, it might make you twitch a little bit but you can't live without it. *(Beat)* Besides you might not think about this but what about me? I am another statistic in this country. Don't you think this disease affects me? /I might not...

DAWETI

Just give me this one thing, Thabo.

THABO

I'll buy you a real coffin.

DAWETI

We both know you don't have the money.

THABO

Well, then, I'll build you /one after

DAWETI

I already built one.

Please hear me Thabo. I'm not going to build a home. (*Daweti coughs.*)

THABO

Who has said anything about building a home?

Thabo covers the coffin with care.

(BEAT) Thabo starts to clean. It is near impossible. He sees a pile a stuff in the corner and goes towards it, Daweti jumps in his way.

DAWETI

What are you doing now? Stop! You're going to ruin the Feng shui of the room.

THABO

This is trash!

DAWETI

So.

THABO

You are really trying to tell me/

DAWETI

Jah. The harmony of the room relies on that one bag. Drop it.

THABO

You are cracking up. It is a good thing I come now- Look at this place. God! You forget how to keep house, have company? You should have offered me cool drink, come now Daweti!

Daweti goes and grabs a warm beer.

THABO

Beer is not what I had in mind.  
Some water?

DAWETI

It's too heavy for me to carry from the tap. Way up that hill then down here, so...

THABO

Then what do you drink around here?

Daweti slams down the beer in front of him

THABO  
Oh, God, Daweti

DAWETI  
God has no business here.

THABO  
Yoh! Apparently you chased him out.

Daweti starts to shuffle around, she sets up two small crates for them to sit on.

DAWETI  
Sit. What do you have to say now, Baas.

Pause. Thabo tries to sit awkwardly on the small crate.

DAWETI  
You seem unsettled.

THABO  
I'm fine.

Thabo finally finds a way to make the small box work as a seat.

DAWETI  
So what's the news, eh?

THABO  
Ummmm?

DAWETI  
*(BEAT, Daweti watches Thabo. He is a million miles away, but sitting right in front of her.)* Eh, Thabo... what's the news?

THABO  
The what?

Thabo is now sitting trying to organize the pleats on the bottom of his pants.

DAWETI  
You okay? Something wrong?

THABO  
No, no, I'm fine, really.

DAWETI

Really? It's just that you usually start to organize things when something is wrong with you?

THABO

Do I?

DAWETI

Yea.

THABO

Oh. Yebo... So what were you asking me about?

DAWETI

The news!

THABO

Oh right. So, let me see... Oh! Very big story... The ANC are trying to move people out of the shacks into these new homes they built for free. But they are encountering two problems; people are staying in the shacks and renting out their government home to make money off of it. And the people who are in charge of assigning the homes have started taking bribes from families who want to move in. So at the end of the day it isn't free anyway because you have to pay someone to get into them, but they are nice homes/

DAWETI

I don't want to hear about this. It doesn't concern me.

THABO

Yes it does. You will qualify for one of those homes.

DAWETI

I will be dead by the time I ever see one of those new homes, Thabo. I don't want to hear about the government or ANC or the president.

THABO

Fine. Well Obama/

DAWETI

From any country! Worthless all of it!

THABO

Then I don't know what news to tell you Daweti.

DAWETI

Well you could tell me what's happening on the soapie 7de Laan?

THABO

Why do all you coloureds love that show?! You know I don't watch that crap.



DAWETI

Well then fun stuff! Like last time you told me about the coffee beans the animals eat, and then shit out.

THABO

What bean?

DAWETI

The coffee beans! What's wrong with you? You are getting old. Your brain is starting to freeze up? You told me about the beans that they sell to the British at 300 something pounds. And the Brits buy it; they pay 50 pounds per cup, that's like R600 per cup, to drink animal shit... Jah, I love it! I didn't even believe you, so I asked Pamela to look it up and it's true...

THABO

That's not even news, I mean it was in the paper but!

DAWETI

Never mind the rest... You remember?

THABO

I remember that story Daweti. But there were/

DAWETI

You used to tell so many stories like that. Good funny stories, jah! I thought you would write a book. Oh, what happened to your book?

THABO

No time for that fun stuff now, got to make Rand, work, make money. Mmmm Jah, if I had been a big rich man, I could have done many things.

DAWETI

We all could do many things if we weren't too concerned with eating or dying, brother. But some people still do them.

THABO

I don't know those people Daweti.

DAWETI

Neither do I... *(They laugh)* ok, now. Let's hear what you have for me today?

THABO

Well now. Let me see here. Oh oh did you here about the black squirrels in Russia (pronounced Rush-she-yah)?

DAWETI

What do you think?

THABO

They say on CNN.com. In a village in Russia/

DAWETI

Where?

THABO

Russia!

DAWETI

Jah, where in Russia (pronounced Rush-she-yah)?

THABO

Who cares it's in Russia? You been to Russia?

DAWETI

How do I know the credibility of the story if you don't know where? It is a big country-

THABO

Ahhhhh, Woman! Would you let me get the story out, you don't need to know where in Russia!(pause) By the Sea!!! A town by the sea.

DAWETI

I like the sea.

THABO

Great! So in Russia the black squirrels killed a big black dog. They think a pinecone shortage led to the attack. That is their food, pinecone. The big stray dog was poking around the trees and started barking at the Squirrels hiding in the branches. Then one day, Bam! They had enough, the squirrels, and they descended and attacked the dog. Millions, thousands, ok, like ten squirrels, ate him. They ran when the villagers came. The people said, the squirrels ran away carrying pieces of the Dog's flesh/

DAWETI

Is that true, Thabo?

THABO

On my life! People are scared because they think the squirrels will come for them next.

DAWETI

Flesh eating squirrels? You cant believe everything you read online.

THABO

It's true women it was on CNN.com that goes to the U.S.

DAWETI

That means nothing; they lie to the people there too.

THABO

The British believe CNN.com; it is very reliable.

DAWETI

OH yes they are the score of truth.

THABO

Aye, you are too much! You have to believe in something Daweti or... you have nothing.

DAWETI

That must be the reason I have nothing. I don't believe the U.S., the British, or South Africa.

THABO

Exactly.

DAWETI

But you blindly believe, and what do you have?

THABO

I have/

DAWETI

Just a bunch of expensive shit. Congratulations!

THABO

That's not fair!

DAWETI

It's True.

THABO

*(Gets up angry)* I like my life.

DAWETI

Fucking good for you! You are like the flesh eating squirrels and everyone else... just feeding the problem.

THABO

Eh Angry women! Don't blame me, squirrel! Do you want to know what is going on in the world or do you just want someone to attack? Ummm? Last time I came here you say "Ohh Thabo, why do you always bring sad news. Wa wa wa, what about the world, Thabo? You've got to look for the good, blah, blah " The good?! Jah, like some happy greeting card! The news is not good. That is reality of these times, or all times if you look at history. It's not me, you can blame me and be angry, but it's not my fault. I didn't put you in a shack!

DAWETI

Eh eh, now that's not fair/

THABO

And to be honest I don't even think people know who to blame anymore. I mean, I guess you can blame the president and ANC, but we put them into power/

DAWETI

Oh, God! I'm tired of hearing this Thabo! People walking around complaining, blah, blah government. But people keep voting for the ANC! It's a shame because if anyone from our government looked at African history, they would see that any party that gains power after colonization stays in power until there is a civil war or something. African democracy! So they feed us crappy American TV Facebok/

THABO

Book, facebook/

DAWETI

Shit, all of it! And we think we're moving forward. They piss on our face and convince us its rain, the united states of Africa/ and people buy it up...

THABO

Piss? Rain?

This is the thing about Apartheid. It used to be so easy... or focused you know. You knew who your enemy was. My dad used to blame the white baas man, right that was tangible and specific. He smiled and said, "Yes Baas" now it's a black baas, now I smile with the whites and say "Yes Baas". We all smile so that our families can have a good house, good education, nice things, but my life isn't smoke and mirrors/, Daweti

DAWETI

Everyone's life is, everyone's life is- I don't want to talk about this! I don't even care that much. It depresses/ me.

THABO

Well you should, everybody should! You used to care so much.

DAWETI

I don't want to talk about this government bullshit, because that is all it is. Bullshit. Bunch of men and women in suits talking a bunch of shit they know nothing about. Trying to fix problems they have never had in their wealthy lives. Cause in the end of the day they go home to their nice homes, with their kids in private schools, with their health insurance and they are a million miles away from this place. A shack they know nothing about and poverty they have never felt. And we are the ones working their nothing wage jobs, and we are the ones who can't even afford to buy their shit, while they make billions. With their back door deals keeping their pockets fed. Money coming from business that profit from keeping us here. It's called capitalism, Thabo, and it makes me sick. So no, I don't care anymore, because I don't want to.

THABO

That's a shame because people you could have changed it.

DAWETI

But I didn't, and I'm not sure anyone/ can

THABO

You're right. But instead of trying you decided to come here and I still don't understand why.

DAWETI

Jah, and when did I get to make that decision Thabo! I can see where life made that decision for me. Like a stupid map. From University to getting sick, can't find a job, doing odds and ends, coming here, staying here...dying here. That was my life. Like a train on a track to no where...

THABO

And you are the conductor of that train/

DAWETI

No, I was just a passenger that didn't know when to get off until there were no more stops.

THABO

There are always stops my friend, and I know you don't want to hear this, but if you decide to listen, God does have a plan for us all/

DAWETI

Really Thabo? Is that supposed to be comforting. So God's divine plan for me was to get sick and die in a shack! Wow what a great guy, really want to meet him/

THABO

No, it's not like/

DAWETI

Maybe we can get some lunch and I can tell him what a fuck shit mess he's made of my life/

THABO

No no no, that is not God! God is/

DAWETI

A fragment of your imagination/

THABO

You know, you are becoming impossible. Living like this/ is no good.

DAWETI

Thabo?

THABO

Look at you? Living in Lord Voldermort's lair/

DAWETI

Who?

THABO

Harry Potter is a international franchise! And your always angry grrr grrr grrr/

DAWETI

*(With a smile)* Thabo?

THABO

I was just trying to tell you about squirrels in Russia, and grr grr grr-!!

DAWETI

What do I care for squirrels in Russia?

THABO

I don't know Daweti; I'm trying to let some life into this place.

DAWETI

I don't want it. You keep the "life" I'm done with it.

THABO

OOOO sister, come come. That is enough of that talk.

They hear Jan in the distance knocking on doors  
down the road. He calls out some house numbers  
then some names.

JAN *(OFF STAGE)*

Excuse me, excuse me, I'm looking for 109 N.D...well, could you tell me where I am?  
Wait, don't leave... *(Dog barking)* Shit.

Both Daweti and Thabo look at the door and wait  
to hear if he is done. Beat.

DAWETI

Sooo... how is your family?

THABO

They are good. My wife got a promotion at the Bank.

DAWETI

Oh that's good!

THABO

Yea, very good! We celebrated last night, a big braai; if you had a phone, then... But lots of people came. Good Food/

DAWETI

What food?

THABO

Boerewors, Dried Apricot and Lamb Sosaties, yellow rice with raisins, Spiced Sausage patties, cheese pot bread. Vetkoek...

DAWETI

Oh, bhuti!

THABO

Meat pies, sausage rolls, oooh yeah, I saved you a plate but... something happened. I dropped it sorry.

DAWETI

Thabo, don't/

THABO

Sorry.

DAWETI

Don't tell me then, ahh I love your patties.

THABO

Yea well, I'll bring some next time.

DAWETI

Yoh... How are the little ones?

THABO

They are good.

DAWETI

Getting big, I bet.

THABO

Yes, oh, the small boy is starting school on Monday. I have pictures in my wallet, here. Oh never mind... I must have left it.

DAWETI

Your wallet?

THABO

It's getting difficult to come here. That train is getting very dangerous.

DAWETI

That's why you started carrying that gun? Jah, I saw it.

THABO

It's just- too much crime, it's, it's no good. People feel like they can just take what you worked hard for. Like today I... I...

DAWETI

What?

THABO

Why don't you come back to Johannesburg? You can stay with us somewhere, it will be good.

DAWETI

Where? You have no room! Nah, I have no interest in Jo'burg. This suits me quite well.

THABO

This part of Soweto is getting so dangerous.

DAWETI

Thabo you have a wonderful family and they shouldn't have to see me like this. I am fine here. I belong here.

THABO

A shack! Nobody belongs in a shack! You were not born for this. Daweti/ you grew up in...

DAWETI

Nobody is born for this Thabo, but sometimes it is the best you can do. Look around; do you see anyone born for this?

THABO

Yes, I do, some people/ are

DAWETI

Leave your judgments to your God! These are people not with the opportunities you had, good education, good University, good /Job

THABO

Jah! You studied law Daweti/

DAWETI

I never got my license...



THABO

(cont.) At Rhodes University and now/

DAWETI

...and now I'm just another Tracker in another fucking Shack.

THABO

You have limited access to water, and no electricity... pardon my "Judgment" but this is no life; not when you had opportunities and you did nothing with them. You waste them away. So many children here would die for what you had. It's unfair to them, you sitting here.

DAWETI

Eh eh, life is unfair, Thabo. Don't put that shit on me, brother. You do not know what will become of these children anyway. We hope they do better, but have we done better? Jah I didn't... My mother thought the same of me I'm sure. Look at this. Big Law degree, dying in a shack.

THABO

But you don't have/

DAWETI

Jah, I stay here. There are people around to talk to, I can hear life happening, there is a pulse. I am sick. I could make your family sick/

THABO

It's just...I can't keep coming here. It's getting too hard. Today... I..

DAWETI

It's fine.

THABO

It's not fine, Daweti. You are my best friend. I just don't... I just can't... What will you do for money?

DAWETI

I have my ways. Maybe I sell some of this stuff, people want to build homes. Maybe I sell my big University brain, make some money off of it. Don't worry about me.

THABO

I do worry.

DAWETI

Jah, but don't. It doesn't help. (Pause)

Daweti coughs and grabs her chest. She drinks some beer to silence the cough. Thabo watched defeated, Daweti sees Thabo.

Enough of this, good friend. Tell me what music you listen to at the Braai?

THABO

All types. Of course we played some Lebo Mathosa, Double H P, and some Brenda Fassie.

DAWETI

Rest in peace, Ma brrrr. *(Daweti dumps some beer on the ground.)*

THABO

Yes rest in peace.

DAWETI

What about Mariam Makeba?

THABO

No, What? It's a Braai!

DAWETI

Oh... Shame. I've got a song of hers making a nest in my brain.

Daweti begins to sing Mariam Makeba. Thabo joins her. Mariam Makeba continues to play through the two monologues. The lights shift and Thabo talks to the audience.

THABO

I was born in a Shack like this. I never told that to anyone. Once I left I told my mom, "That's it, I'm never coming back. You either come with me, or we say our final goodbyes." In the end she came, but it took some major convincing. She wanted to stay. I never understood that! Why would you want to live like this? Why would you choose to stay? Daweti will stay; she is too stubborn to leave. This is the last time I come here; I can't come back, after... I met Daweti at University. I liked her hair it looked like a spring. When all the other women wore their hair straight, Daweti had the biggest curly hair you have ever seen. Like a lion head. I could not believe how forward she was, more like a man than a woman. She had a red car, and had been given an award for a paper she had written on something I can't remember. She is the only person in the whole world that knows that dreamed of being a writer. She is my best friend. She is the person I turn to for everything. When my mother died she got me through. She introduced me to my favorite international dish, called pancakes. She knows my darkest secrets. When I didn't have enough money for tuition one semester Daweti gave me the money and never asked for it back. She still won't take it. I can't picture the world without her in it. It would be like the night sky without the stars or moon. It would be weird, and lonely...

Thabo goes back to singing with Daweti, she breaks away to speak the following to the audience.

DAWETI

The Day I met Thabo we were at a social dance. Everyone had paired up to dance really slow and close, but nobody would choose me. There had been these rumors, ubambe ilotto. And...

FLASHBACK, they jump back in time to when they first met. The Lights shift and the world changes. They are back at a school dance where they awkwardly dance away from each other.

THABO

This song is good-oh...

DAWETI

*(Ignores him)*

THABO

Umm, she is such a fine singer... classic.  
I really like your hair, it's very... Fun! Like grape vine, or coil... it's like a noodle/

DAWETI

/My hair looks like food? Jah, alright, go on get out of here.

THABO

No no. It's a good thing, it's...I like noodles. You have a dimple it is very/

DAWETI

If you are trying to pick me up, I'm not interested. I just want to dance... alone... with you somewhere over there behind all those people.

THABO

No no, It's not that. I just saw your debate on The Truth and Reconciliation Commission. You were really good.

DAWETI

You did?... Sorry I don't remember you being in my class.

THABO

No, I was auditing it. You were very convincing and powerful, I couldn't take my eyes off of you.

DAWETI

I'm not interested.

THABO

I mean, you were captivating- authentic. You speak with so much conviction.

DAWETI

Alright, alright, then what did I say?

THABO

That you were not interested in/

DAWETI

No, In the speech?

THABO

Oh! Something... Human beings are born inherently good, possessing so much light and... And something like we must find a way to forgive ourselves because everybody was part of Apartide, even those who suffered from it, and that will help get rid of our personal hate or something... I guess I don't really remember the words too well, but I do remember that you were right!

DAWETI

The judges didn't seem to think so... I lost...

THABO

Jah, but one day they will. When our generation are the judges, they will.

DAWETI

Daweti.

THABO

Uh, what/

DAWETI

Daweti, my name.

THABO

Yes I know.

DAWETI

What is your name?

THABO

Thabo!

DAWETI

What do you study?

THABO

You know a little bit of this, little bit of that/

DAWETI

Do you even study here?

THABO

Yes! Of course I do, I would never creep around/

DAWETI

No, it was a joke

THABO

Oh yes I see.

DAWETI

No you don't.

THABO

Not really, no. I haven't decided what I want to do with my life. But I do know that whatever it is I want to help people, in the name of Jesus/ and write

DAWETI

In the name of Jesus? Why not in the name of Thabo? Then everyone is included.

THABO

Ha, another joke.

DAWETI

I'm serious.

THABO

Ooh well, I want to help people, period. In the name of Jesus is just something people say. Like, I dance in the name of Jesus, or I testify in the name of Jesus/

DAWETI

I see. Like, I put on my shoe in the name of Jesus, and I drink this beer in the name of Jesus/

THABO

Well not so much the beer part.

DAWETI

I'm sure Jesus drank beer? It's the poor mans wine and he was poor.

THABO

Jah, okay, let's not talk about Jesus.

DAWETI

*(laughing)* Why not?

THABO

Because he means a great deal to people here and they don't want to think about their lord and savior sucking a dumpie.

DAWETI

Nobody can even hear me.

THABO

It means a great deal to me.

DAWETI

I see... What does it mean to you, Thabo?

THABO

You know- I don't know.

DAWETI

I would love to know.

THABO

Everything! You know everything that is good and beautiful and pure. (beat)  
Like the flowers in the spring time around the garden route, Namaqualand. You know the kinds that make you just stop and catch your breath, those colors are why we live. And the smell moist earth, and children when you make them laugh and peoples eyes if you can catch them really open before they put up the security walls. And love, tons of love, mountains of love. And good tears, and good food, and good intensions, oh and dancing when your heart becomes the rhythm, and singing loudly when nobody can hear, alone. Sacrifice. You're mother's arms. The night sky when you can see all the stars. Silence. Your heart beating. A sigh. A laugh. A cry. Mmmmmm

DAWETI

You are a poet Thabo.

THABO

That's what it is, to me.

DAWETI

Just like that? I don't know what to say.

THABO

I've made you uncomfortable haven't I? I always do this. People have told me my whole life that I am strange.

DAWETI

Me too.

THABO

But in a good way.

DAWETI

No, like in a strange way.

THABO

Would you like to dance?

DAWETI

Hell yes I want to dance, brother lets go!!!

THABO

Well okay then!

Daweti talks to the audience, back to the present.

DAWETI

We danced like two crazy people. I thought he was the kindest person I ever met. Thabo puts everybody else first, can't help it. He has the best heart, God gave him that. I don't really believe in God, but he does, so I know it's true. Jah! I know.

They dance like at a party. Somehow it turns into a ritual dance, into something that is unrecognizable but requires two people. It ends with them across stage from each other breathing each other in. A sneeze brings them back to life in present time.

We hear Jan in the doorway

JAN

I'm looking for 109, you know 1. 0. 9. *(He pops his head in.)* 109? *(Daweti hides her face. Thabo shakes this head no, Jan walks out of door.)* There are no numbers...*(He talks to his radio.)* Jah I am trying but there are no numbers here in Fucksburg!

Jan fades out as he walks away.

Beat. This time Thabo goes to the door.

THABO

What is going on?

DAWETI

No clue. It can't be good.

THABO

I feel kind of bad for him.

DAWETI

Why?

THABO

He seems lost. Like a lamb in a pack of lions.

DAWETI

Really, a lamb? Lions? Really? You take some major poetic license there. I would think a snake in... what is something that could eat a snake but doesn't like the way they taste?

THABO

A leopard or owl... or something, like the big five?

DAWETI

Jah, that works.

Daweti goes to get another beer, she offers one to Thabo, who shakes his head. Thabo notices her massive beer collection.

THABO

Wow, okay! So I have to ask. Exactly how do you get the money to buy all this beer?

DAWETI

It's not important.

THABO

Fine. But how? Sisi, I want to know... DAWETI!

DAWETI

The security guard at the Pick n Pick is 24 hours drunk.

THABO

You mean the Pick n Pay?

DAWETI

Jah, but everyone calls it the Pick n Pick now because he is 24 hours drunk. All the time. So Pam get the beer from the Pick n Pick and brings it here.

THABO

So everyone is just stealing from the Pick n Pay?!

DAWETI

No, contrary to what you think not everyone in Soweto has decayed moral values, bhuti. Just us select few godless brutes.

THABO

It is wrong, Daweti.



DAWETI

What do I care- right and wrong! You better not say anything. Catch a wave of Christian guilt and say anything Thabo... Thabo!

THABO

Fine. I won't say anything. *(Beat)* Fuck it, give me that beer.

DAWETI

Eh eh now that's the spirit!

Daweti turns around to get Thabo a beer. While her back is turned Thabo grabs a bottle but it is opened and not a beer.

THABO

Daweti what is this? Sisi what is this?

DAWETI

*(Beat)* Don't drink that Thabo.

THABO

Why can't I drink this Daweti! Why?!?

DAWETI

It's not good for you.

THABO

No No No! This is ridiculous I can't believe how far you've gone. I mean drinking poison! I don't know what to do anymore, it's just that I can't come back here and take care of you but you obviously need someone to look after you/

DAWETI

No I don't, it will be fine.

THABO

No you are not fine! This is not fine! Nothing in this shack is fine. You are slipping. You can not do this. You just... You break my heart.

DAWETI

Jah, well...

THABO

*(Cont.)* I meant it when I said I can't come here anymore/

DAWETI

You don't have to/

THABO

I can't just leave you like this/

DAWETI

Yes you can, and will/

THABO

You cannot live like this/

DAWETI

I'm not going to. I wouldn't even call this living, just getting by on scraps.

THABO

Daweti, what am I going to/

DAWETI

It is custom that if a person is killed in an accident or something tragic. That the mourners come to that site where they died, and take a branch from some special tree...umm... You are Zulu, you now the tree I'm talking about. They put that branch over their shoulder and use it to guide that person's spirit home. But there is one condition Thabo. You can't look back. The mourners can't look back because if they do that person's spirit can get lost forever.

THABO

I'm a Christian we don't...

DAWETI

When there is nobody left to remember you that is when you have truly died. You will put a piece of aloe in water to remove bad luck. You wait a week and do not socialize, wear all black and shave your hair... well your good there. After that week of mourning you forget about me. Don't keep me here. And when your hair grows back like a flower in the springtime... or when it should have grown back like a flower in the... anyway. You will be new and should start over. And if you ever feel my spirit gently tugging you back, you tell me (*song : NJALO*) and I will go away from your memories. You will be happy. You will be free.

THABO

No I wont. I can't be... I will never be...Today I...

DAWETI

It's okay. Just think about it Thabo.

THABO

I can not entertain such ideas so drop it!

DAWETI

Well, you **could**/

THABO

No I couldn't/

DAWETI

I mean you **can**, you just don't want to/

THABO

No I can't/

DAWETI

You just don't **want** to/

THABO

I CAN'T AND I DON'T WANT TO! The bible says/

DAWETI

The bible that was written by some man/

THABO

The bible that was written by GOD/

DAWETI

By some man translating God's word... seems very open to interpretation if you ask me/

THABO

No one is asking you! It is GOD's Word! You can't fight me on that! I am right.

DAWETI

In theory.

THABO

Ahhhh Woman you are sooooo... Why can't you just...

DAWETI

Do what you want me to do?

THABO

Yes! Please!

DAWETI

No.

THABO

*(Beat)* You would have made an amazing lawyer you know that.

DAWETI

You would have made an amazing poet.

THABO

Okay. I get it.

DAWETI

Do you? Anyway I still have a chance to change something. The worms are going to love my University brain. Maybe one will eat it and that money would have been worth while.

THABO

Worms don't even have brains.

DAWETI

Exactly, maybe one eats my DNA and it changes their DNA and a whole species of worms are born with brains. Like giraffes with short necks evolved into the giraffes with long necks/

THABO

I don't want to talk about this/

DAWETI

Oh come on bhuti,/ God made evolution.

THABO

Because it's morbid. And God made giraffes with long necks because the short neck giraffes couldn't eat the food!

DAWETI

Well that is solved then. God will make worms with my brain matter.

THABO

Grr grrr grrr.

Daweti starts coughing, it is really bad. She tries to get some beer. Thabo feels helpless and unable to help his friend, he grabs the container for water and heads out.

THABO

I'm going to get you some water.

Thabo starts to leave but realizes he has no idea where to go.

Where am I going?

Daweti tries to answer but can't get many words out between her coughs.

THABO

Forget it. I will just ask someone. Stay here.

Thabo leaves. Daweti finally releases the cough that she has been trying to hold back from Thabo.

We see how sick she really is, as she falls on the coffin violently gasping for air. She ends up in a fetal position and alone. She notices the silence and embraces it like an old friend. She lies on top on the coffin with her eyes closed.

Voices are heard off stage singing **“Thula tu” Lullaby.**

Lights change and the world moves. Thabo and Jan enter singing with water buckets. They walk around the coffin dumping dirt onto Daweti and the floor in front of the coffin. They are in another space and time. When they finish dumping dirt Daweti wakes up and talks to the audience. Jan and Thabo sing “Thula tu” underneath her monologue as they watch Daweti from outside of the shack.

#### DAWETI

You know, I have such beautiful dreams now. When I first found out I was sick my dreams were scary, and terrifying. Of bad things happening. I would trip, or robbed, or shot and I would jolt awake like, (inhale, she opens her eyes) and I couldn't go back to sleep. One time I was crying in my sleep. I had lost something, I can't remember what, but it was important, something I didn't know was important yet. I couldn't recognize what it was but it felt like a piece of me being ripped away, and I wasn't whole anymore. When I woke I had tears leaking out of my closed eyes. My pillow was wet, not from drool. I would drool so much, my poor sister and I had to share a bed growing up, she would call it lake Daweti. “Last night I took a swim in Lake Daweti”, she would say. I would laugh. Life was... Anyway... The day I told my mother that I was sick. I came home from graduation and she was so happy. She greeted me in the front yard and gave me a big hug. I gave her my degree and it just came out. I couldn't hold it in, I was sick. And she changed right there in front of me, something behind her eyes shifted, like a bird flying away behind her body and my mother flew away on the back of that bird. The whole time standing there, in front of me, where a minute felt like a life time... Gone. And as she turned around and walked away, she never looked behind her, left me standing in the yard. And when she locked the front door I knew that I no longer had a mother. And... I... Ever since then my dreams are magical, beautiful, effervescent. Sometimes I try to stay asleep all day to keep living in them. Ha, I love it!

Daweti falls asleep, and the Lullaby ends. Jan disappears as Thabo picks up the water bucket. The Lights shift and we are back inside the shack.

Thabo enters with the water bucket, slightly wet from the water and sweat.

THABO

It looks like I pee myself! I'm walking back, and people keep pointing and laughing. I think they know I'm not from around here but...

Thabo notices Daweti is asleep. He bends down and touches her head lightly. He tries to clean some of the dirt but gets overwhelmed and sits down next to her.

THABO

I really need to tell you that- I don't know how to say this- because I don't want you to hate me- but I guess it doesn't matter- Last night I... (pause)

He sees her breathing is labored, he touches her finger tips.

THABO

(To Daweti)

Out of the brown dust and hopes a child was created.

A sigh

A song

A burp

A fart

(BAM)

Lights change and the world moves. Jan enters underneath the above creating the rhythm of a heartbeat. The following is to the Audience as the three of them say these words individually and sometimes together. They use Gumboot dance steps to create the (BAM) sounds. This is not Choreo-Poetry. There should always be a steady beat that resembles the sound of a heartbeat.

Her eyes reflected the night sky, her hair was the color of moist earth, and unlike most babies she asked for nothing.

(BAM) So people loved her.

She was raised on Maze meal and water.

The sun

Desire

The earth

A need

She rolled in dust, pirouetted in the dark, never wanted to take a bath, but stayed in the vast never ending ocean for hours. With mosquito bites on her thighs and childless eyes

(BAM) She was the answer to an unheard question.

(BAM) A gift to an unknown future.

And deep in her possession was a rare golden light. It poured out of her, as she desperately tried to hide it.

(BAM) But it blocked the night sky  
and the township couldn't sleep

People started to notice she was different, one day she noticed as well. She felt watched, fought to look the same, changed her body, molded like clay.

(BAM) But the light shown through and blocked the moon.

The people grew angry,

Lightning

A scream

Restless

Tired

The township wanted to sleep and missed the moon. They banished the girl. Ripped her from her home, placed her near the tree of infinity and left at the first sight of a spring blossom.

(BAM) She screamed at a door with no answers, talked to air molecules, ate dust and drank her tears.

Her confession as they fall to the ground.

She falls with them, she gives in to the earth.

Comfort

Disappear

Wrapped in a blanket of timeless creation, wrapped in dust.

She becomes dust. She has found home.

(BAM) Quiet,

Stillness

Shhhhhhhhhhhhhhh

(BAM) Decades go by.

(BAM) A stranger probes deep into the earth in search of water. A traveler from another land.

(BAM) He finds her, a vast stream of golden answers. The stranger sees her light.

Rare

Beautiful

Expensive

He takes a piece of her away, and sells it to the highest bid. He comes back for more.

Others come with him and they mine down deep into the earth and find her.

(BAM) Taking pieces of her away

away

pieces

more

more

money pour in like rain. They rip her open, mine deeper, take pieces away, dig deeper, deformed, taking pieces away, but they love her, take pieces away

(BAM) The golden light dims,

take pieces away

only one piece left.

*(Thabo returns to the seat he started the story in.)*

They leave her. Dug into, deformed. She cries like lightning, nobody hears her.

Daweti repeats this last line as she lays back down on the coffin as she was when they started the story.

Jan leaves while keeping the sound of the heart beat on his chest.

THABO

(BAM) she lies down outside of Jo'bug and becomes the dust.

Quiet

Stillness

Shhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh

When it ends Jan appears in the doorway, the lights come back to normal, and we are back in the present. Jan knocks on the outside of the shack.

THABO

I don't know how to tell you this but last night I...

DAWETI

You what?

JAN

*(Knocking)* Hello?

THABO

You were awake?!

JAN

*(Knocking)* Sanibona?

DAWETI

I don't think so. I heard you in my dream- you said "last night I..." What?

JAN

Sanibona

THABO

Sharp, sharp.

DAWETI

Hello.



JAN

Hello? AHHH, Jah, Hello 109 N.D. Good afternoon or evening, AHH, afternoon. I guess it really doesn't matter; it's just that strange part of the day, you know. AHH, sorry, long day you know? (Jan recognizes Daweti) Well of course you do. You are part of the reason it was so long. My name's Jan De Klerk I'm from the Johannesburg Department of Housing, I'm just doing routine checks on the Flood kits we sent to this area You received some wood from us about... AHHH Shit! (drops papers and starts searching through them on the ground to find hers) you received a kit about a month ago. Jah, I just have to do a routine inspection on the progress toward repairing your home, AHHH

DAWETI

Siyekele.

Jan takes a step in.

Eh eh! You can't just come in here.

JAN

Well, I'm sorry but I would have knocked again but you seem to be in need of a door this time.

DAWETI

It's right there. Now get out of here! Hambha Hambha, We're fine.

JAN

Hambha, hambha. Yes I have heard that a lot today.

DAWETI

Then... Voetsek!

JAN

That's great but unfortunately I can't instantly grant your request. I have a job, and I have to do that job to the best of my ability. I took an oath/

DAWETI

I don't care about an oath! What do you want?

JAN

Jah! Right, as I was saying before. My name is/

DAWETI

Jan! We know.

JAN

Yes, glad to see you were listening as I was saying my name- sorry. I'm from the Department of Housing, and I'm just checking up on the building supplies we provided you, after the flooding in this area and to check on progress of... your... home. *(Pause)* I believe we sent you a door.

THABO

Jah! She got the door. Why don't you show him the door.

JAN

Yes, we can start with the door, that would be great... *(Shuffles papers)*

DAWETI

We can start by you turning around, and walking, and keep walking till your back at whatever god forsaken hole you crawled out from. While you're there you can tell the Department of Housing, that they can take their building supplies and shove them up/

THABO

Daweti!

JAN

You're Daweti?!? You sent me off in the wrong direction on purpose? Spent half the day trying to get back to where I started in the first place! OH this is it man/

DAWETI

Voetsek! Just Piss off!

THABO

Sorry man, she's gotten a little hostile since she's gone off the meds.

JAN

Oh, Well, Jah!

DAWETI

Thabo! My business, Eh!

THABO

Daweti! Grr grr grr! He's just trying to do his job.

JAN

Oh, thank you brother.

DAWETI

He's not your brother.

THABO

Ya man, I'm not your brother.

JAN

Great! That's settled then, we are of no relation. But now that I have found Miss Daweti no last name, if I could just/

DAWETI

You could just leave. What's wrong with you are you hard of hearing?

JAN

No, Daweti my ears are fine/

DAWETI

Then get out!

JAN

I really want to but unfortunately, I have a job to do/

DAWETI

I don't care about the job you have to do.

JAN

Okay, okay... Daweti, that's your name right?

DAWETI

No.

JAN

Well it says here that is your name.

THABO

That's her name.

DAWETI

Stay out of this Thabo!

THABO

Yeh lisa umoya... or Hey sharp sharp (Calm down.) Why are you so hot, eh? Just let him speak.

DAWETI

I don't care what he has to say. I don't trust him.

THABO

Why?

DAWETI

Why? Why not! Why should I? Look at him!

THABO

Daweti don't be a racist.

DAWETI

He works for the government- the Black Government.

THABO

He has done nothing wrong!

JAN

He's right; technically I've done nothing. I couldn't even knock you don't have a door/

DAWETI

It's right there! He broke it, otherwise it would be there, and you would be here! *(She starts coughing.)*

JAN

Good point, but/

THABO

I didn't even break it on purpose! It just came off!

DAWETI

Maybe you shouldn't have been handling it so aggressively!

THABO

Maybe if you didn't live in a shack.

DAWETI

Maybe you should go home.

THABO

Maybe you should come with me.

DAWETI

Maybe I'm not going.

THABO

Maybe I can't leave you here.

DAWETI

Maybe maybe maybe maybe. *(Coughing)*

THABO

Maybe you should calm down.

DAWETI

I am calm! *(Wheezing)*

JAN

Great! That was lovely, heart warming really. So maybe we can go over the supplies that we sent you, and then I can go. *(He picks up a piece of trash.)* so much dirt/

DAWETI

Oh No!

THABO

Just put it down. She has a Feng shui.

JAN

What?

THABO

You know... an order to things here.

JAN

Really?

DAWETI

*(Still trying to recover from last cough.)*

Get him out Thabo! Doesn't even know a fung shui.

THABO

*(Hands her a beer.)* Drink! *(To Jan)* So what papers do you need us to fill out?

JAN

I just need to inspect the materials and make sure they are being used toward the building of a new home or home improvements. So if you could just allow me to look around then we can sign some papers /and

DAWETI

No! No lookie round, no lookie round! I...

THABO

You sit! *(To Jan)* Well, I can tell you that I came here today to start building so everything is fine here! *(He picks up something completely wrong, and some wood and starts whacking it with authority.)* See, all good here. So where are the papers to sign?

JAN

You came here to help her build?

THABO

Yea, so it fine you know.

JAN

Really?

THABO

Of course.

JAN

I don't think so. I'm sorry. I mean you are dressed awfully nice to be building a home.

DAWETI

What do you care what he is wearing?

JAN

Well, I need to do my job. I'm not small of mind/

DAWETI

Tsssss.

JAN

(*Cont.*) I don't want to put question to his credibility, but I don't know anybody that plans to cut wood in such nice clothing.

DAWETI

Well then, obviously you don't know Thabo; cause if you did then you would know that these clothes are not that nice to him. Oh no! He's big time. Suits, hats, leather shoes, bling bling/

THABO

I brought a change of clothing/

DAWETI

Besides, he's going to change.

JAN

That may be, but you've had these supplies for over a month/

DAWETI

I've been busy.

JAN

What? Okay, where is the door we provided you? Where? No answer? Well/ that's what...

THABO

She has it man, calm down.

JAN

Where? I would love to see it. I see a few supplies in the corner over there and some in the front yard, but nothing near the amount we provided you... and you signed for/

DAWETI

You know what, I'm tired of this/...

JAN

You know what I'm tired of? You are my 12th house of the same shit. You need to prove to me that you are building a suitable home with the materials that the government provided you, and paid for! Or I am going to write you up! By God woman I will do it! So where is it? Hummm...

DAWETI

Get out of my home!

JAN

You call this a home?

DAWETI

Now!!!

JAN

No! Nee nee nee (no, no, no) ! Not until I have done my job! A job, I have a job. Be mad, yell, if you want but I'm not leaving until you cooperate!

THABO

Just show him something Daweti.

JAN

Jah! Just show me something, anything... come on, I dare you... well let's see it! (pause) I knew it, just as I had suspected you've got nothing to show. But it's all right for you to yell at me, throw me out, send me on a fucking waste of my day journey into Dante's inferno, but you are the one at fault! You!!! Stealing from the government, selling the supplies to buy beer! I'm going to write you up/ that's what I'm going to do.

DAWETI

I hate you!

THABO

Daweti!

JAN

Jah! Well I hate you too. (beat) What else you got? (beat) Good. So why don't we start with the door, wouldn't that be nice!

DAWETI

You want to see the door?

JAN

Yes, I would love to see the door!

DAWETI

I show you the door then you go?

JAN

Jah! Fine!

DAWETI

Fine. *(She takes the sheet of the coffin.)* That piece is the door.

JAN

*(Looks at door.)* You made a box out of a door? *(Beat)* Of course you would, why wouldn't you. It makes complete sense. I mean why bother using it as a door, since you obviously don't need one. Why do we have a door anyway, they're completely over rated. It's just one of those annoying social excesses that Soweto has decided is futile and useless. I mean what am I supposed to tell them?

DAWETI

You said if I show you the door then you'll go... So go! Bye!

JAN

Yes, but I was hopefully expecting it to be attached to some kind of home, not a decorative box! *(Referring to papers.)* Question 7 has client used supplies for home assembly? Answer, she built a box isn't going to work for the Department of Housing...

THABO

It's not a box. It's a coffin.

JAN

What?

THABO

She built herself a coffin. Depending on how you look at it, it could qualify as a home.

DAWETI

Jah! That's the front door. Want in?

JAN

NO?!

DAWETI

It's where you belong.

JAN

What did you just say? *(Pause)* Woman did you just say I belong in a coffin?

DAWETI

Yes, that's what I said/

JAN

Is that a threat because I can easily radio our security officers /just down

DAWETI

What are you going to do really you are with my people, in my area/

THABO

This is not your area!



JAN

What I can and will do is take the supplies back, and you can pay the government the difference. You want to talk big. That's it, get me the wood/

DAWETI

Put it down! Don't you touch anything/ Jy gat! (You ass!) or Jou Foken Poes (You Fucken Cunt )

JAN

I can see you built your coffin out of the wood. I'm going to need to take that apart/

Daweti picks up some dirt and throws it in  
JAN's face, she pushes him away from her  
coffin, Thabo grabs her.

DAWETI

You will not touch-, no you won't/ take anything

JAN

I wont no, but now that you have assaulted me, I'm going to radio our security officers/  
with the truck and we are going to load it up...

Jan gets on his walkie-talkie for security.

THABO

Daweti just leave it be, we can go for walk and come back when they're gone.

JAN

/5 min?

DAWETI

No! He can't take it!! I built it, it's all I have!

Lights Shift. The world changes. Daweti and  
Thabo freeze while Jan talks to the audience.

JAN

*(To audience.)*

She built a fucking coffin! Ahhhhhhhhh!!!! This is my 12th house today. I use that term loosely, nothing I have seen today would I qualify as a home. A place where you put your heart, and keep it safe. You know. But every place I visited it's the same thing, "Get out! Hamba, hamba" little to no work done on improvements. Some of them didn't even have the supplies anymore. They probably sell them, who knows! They complain to their ANC Government, "You promised us this, you told us that. My house is flooded, Where is it?" Government actually sends them the supplies, which is a miracle in its self since the ANC never follows through on its promises, but they actually do for once and bam, sold or nothing done.

Then they'll turn around next time it floods and ask for more. Complain about this and that.

Everyone wants the quick fix, but they will do nothing for themselves. Even if you give it to them for free they won't build it. Waste of money. Worst part is that I don't give a shit about this job. I actually hate this job. Hate!! That's not a strong enough word. I don't want to care about what these people do with this shit. I studied philosophy like Plato, Kant, Marx, Hegel and Proudhon. I debated over philosophy of poverty, the machinations of the state and the philosophy of right! "Man is born free but everywhere he is in chains"- Rousseau. I long for those conversations. The university is full of them. Then you leave and get some second rate job to pay the bills and they seem like a distant dream. Another reality on another planet. I can't even see them now. I think I have forgotten what I wanted to be or do in this world, like the sinew of my muscles are made up of hardship and pain, and disappointment, ahhh South Africa. It just seems pointless, like I'm striving and working to live in this shit... Jah, forget it. *(Pause)* I might just be clinically depressed.

*(Beat)*

I used to dream of such things like my mother or love, that electricity in an embrace, the dew on the trees in the early morning, and colors so many vibrant colors like you see only in the townships, ohh and rain, the smell of South Africa being washed clean. Now I have dreams of gunshots, but it's not just one shot it's many. I keep shooting, bam, bam, bam. On the last shot I wake.

This shit job was one of the best I could get; all my friends said I was lucky, Ha!!!

Affirmative action is for the black majority, 35 million blacks in this country, 5 million whites. I only got it because even the blacks didn't want to do it, going through townships asking people to prove they used the supplies from the government! White man, it's like a death wish! Jah, Jah, I know... nobody has pity for the crying Afrikaner, fathers of apartheid. But who are they when they turn around and do the exact same thing?

As the light changes and we shift back into the present, Daweti takes Thabo's Gun and points it at Jan.

DAWETI

You are not taking anything. Get in the box!

THABO

Daweti! What are you doing?

DAWETI

Stay out of this Thabo. You heard me get in!

JAN

Jah! I heard you... Daweti/

DAWETI

Don't say my fucking name.

JAN

This is unnecessary; we don't need to do this, lets just talk about the rationally/

DAWETI

Move!

JAN

Security is coming now.

DAWETI

I will kill anyone that comes in that door but first I will kill you. Operation Vula. Get in!!

Shoots gun into the air.

JAN

Yes, yes... Please... I will leave. Please... I'm sorry, really I am just the fucking messenger, come on! Oh God!

DAWETI

Don't you have eyes? There's no God here! *(She closes coffin.)* Hand me that nail Thabo.

THABO

I want no part of this. I'll do nothing

DAWETI

Of course you wont. It's people like you that keeps this country on its knees praying and not doing.

She gets a nail and hammer and starts nailing the coffin.

THABO

The security is coming Daweti? What then!!! I've got a family!

JAN

*(He hears the pounding and starts screaming.)*

DAWETI

Shut up! Shut your mouth! I told you not to come in but you felt that you were entitled to enter. You are not entitled to anything any more. How does that feel. Welcome to my home. I didn't ask for it but I guess it was the best that I could do. I didn't ask for your supplies, but you sent it and now you hold me accountable on how I use them? You are in my home I don't care what you think of it! Why is it such a big deal to everyone that I make it myself? That I want something beautiful that I put my hands into. I want to create something for myself. I didn't get to choose much! AIDS, Broken shack. But I get to choose this one thing! My death, eh? You choose your heaven Thabo; you build your shrine, worship your God! This is like that for me! So I'm not going to let you or Mr. ANC tell me how!

This is the one thing that is mine, my whole life, let me paint my night sky on the door, let me use whatever I have to make a cushion for my head to rot on! Do you hear me?

THABO

I hear you Daweti. Put the gun down/

DAWETI

Do you really hear me?

THABO

Yes, just please put it down. I can't have this happen.

DAWETI

Maybe you can't stop it!

THABO

Maybe, but I've had enough of this today! I understand how you feel/ please just put it down.

DAWETI

Understand? How could you possibly understand anything Thabo? You have the perfect life!

THABO

That's not true, I/

DAWETI

You what? Tell me that your dying, tell me that when people look at you they pity you, tell me they move their children away from you when your on the street, they can't look you in the eyes. Tell me that your God has taken everything you worked for and dreamed of/

THABO

I'll tell you that there are people that love you and you pushed them away! I'll tell you that you hiding from life doesn't save anyone the pain of your absence. I'll tell you that blaming everyone for their happiness/

DAWETI

How do you know/

THABO

(*Cont.*) isn't going to help. I'll tell you that I might just be able to relate to something you are going through. No, I'm not sick, but I am not living the life I dreamed, and last night I... oh God... I know what it feels like to loose everything?

DAWETI

You know nothing. You have family, love, God. Your life meant something, you were not worthless.

THABO

I get it!

DAWETI

No you don't! God has not forgotten you/

THABO

I lost my heaven! There is no place for me there! I didn't lose my wallet, and I didn't drop your food.

DAWETI

What what are you talking about, Thabo?

THABO

I didn't want you to freak out. I was on the train here from Jo'burg last night, and this... He put a gun to my back on the train, he took my wallet with my pay check and the food and... I don't know something in me just snapped. I couldn't believe somebody could just strip me of everything I had worked so hard for, Jah! I got so hot, when he jumped off at the next stop... I thought he was a grown man. I couldn't see behind me when it happened... When he jumped off the train, I jumped off right before the doors closed, I grabbed his gun and shot!

The following is to the audience. Daweti and Jan join Thabo, speaking the words of the poem sometimes individually, sometimes together. They use Gumboot dance steps to create the (BAM) sounds. This is not Choreo-Poetry. There should always be a steady beat that resembles the sound of a heartbeat.

THABO

But it wasn't just one shot, it was many. I kept shooting, bam, bam, bam  
(BAM) How dare you  
(BAM) Take what is mine  
(BAM) Worked so hard for, sacrificed dreams for

Jan and Daweti join, stage magic.

You rip me open, mine deeper, take pieces away, dig deeper,  
deformed, taking pieces away, but you love me, take pieces away  
(BAM) the golden light dims,  
take pieces away  
only one piece left.  
(BAM) I can't find my quiet stillness, shhhhhh

(BAM) I watch you build your wealth on top of mountains!

(BAM) I am the mountain that feeds you.

(BAM) That provides you with life.

That holds you, cradles you and that you can't live without.

(BAM)I am the one you walk on!

(BAM) walk on

(BAM) walk on

(BAM) walk on

(BAM) I used to close my eyes and dream of love, of the African sky, limitless, weightless, floating.

(BAM) My laughter poured from the earth/

My dreams glided through the sky like a /soft cloud

Out of the dust I was created.

(BAM) What happened to...

(BAM) Dreams of a life I felt inspired to live.

Now I dream of gunshots.

Jan goes back inside the coffin. The lights  
change and we come back to the present.

THABO

*(Back to Daweti)*

BAM BAM Bam, bam... Then I woke up. He was a small boy. I didn't know what to do. His friends had run off. There was so much blood. I picked up his head and thought this could be my son. I walked him to the hospital and... walked just walked  
What have I done? Jah, I was building my place in heaven. I worked my whole life; yes baas, no baas, good black man, good man, worked for that place. I built it like you built your coffin. See I understand!!! Now's it gone! You're trying to hold on to something to wake you up the next day. I understand!! I took a life, no turning back time... I don't know... it's gone. Put the gun down! Daweti/

DAWETI

Thabo, I will make you a deal.

THABO

How can I take it back? Ahhh, God, Jesus. Please. What have I done?

DAWETI

It's okay brother.

THABO

It's not okay Daweti, it will never be okay again. God what have I done? (he starts to pray)

DAWETI

What you had to do.

THABO

No, I didn't have to. It was just stuff, it doesn't amount to... God, I am so sorry/

DAWETI

It was an accident. You are a good man Thabo/

THABO

No I'm not/

DAWETI

You're human.

THABO

I'm so sorry/

DAWETI

I forgive you, brother.

THABO

It's not you I am worried about, what have I done?

DAWETI

Thabo I will make you a deal.

THABO

What are you talking about?

DAWETI

I will give you back your heaven and you will give me mine.

THABO

You can't do that. It's done.

DAWETI

I have this man prisoner. I will let him go for you, but you must do something to save his life.

THABO

What are you saying? Let that man go!

DAWETI

I will kill this man Thabo! And any man that comes in here

THABO

Okay, calm down Daweti!

DAWETI

Jah! I will! So you must stop me, to do that you must shoot me.  
No no no...You can get your heaven back. You save his life, I take mine, it's not on your conscience.

THABO

What? No! Absolutely not!

DAWETI

That's what you have to do to save his life/

THABO

No!

DAWETI

Yes!

THABO

NO! Did you hear nothing I just said?!

DAWETI

Please, they're going to take the only thing I have!!! Please have mercy. This disease works like a clock ticking backward. You get in line and fate gives you a number. Then one day God starts calling numbers and you watch as everyone around you gets called. Meanwhile you just wait for your turn. But as time creeps, and everyone else is gone you know your number's coming, you're next... That's the worst part, the wait. Why bother trying when you know it coming. Then you start coughing up blood and you know. I'm dying. Every day it gets worse and I know there is no hope, no miracle drug. I can feel it coming, now. I'm scared, please. When you leave, I'm scared and alone and and... there is this darkness here. Right here. I feel it creeping and I don't want to open my eyes. It can creep to other people too, and consume them. I can't live with myself... Please it's going to hurt. No water... I beg you. It's the most beautiful act of friendship of love... I need you to help me friend. Or I will shoot him then myself!

THABO

Stop; stop...

Takes the gun out of her hand.

DAWETI

(She stays down)

Please, please...

THABO

No! Get up, forget it.

He opens the coffin and lets Jan out.

Get out! Go, we are sorry. Call them now and tell them not to come.



JAN

Yes, *(He gets on walkie-talkie.)* I'm just going to go. They wont come. *(Stops at door.)*  
Daweti, the home you built is beautiful, having just spent some quality time inside,  
ummm... I think you will find it comforting, peaceful. And, I don't know what to say... It  
warmed my heart. Sorry for you Daweti. I really am. Sorry Thabo, I'll go.

Jan leaves.

(BEAT)

THABO

See now, all better now! Yoh! Come now Daweti. I'll help you with your coffin.

Thabo starts putting things in place. At one point  
he lifts Daweti to standing by her armpits. He  
pauses behind her for a moment, pats her on the  
back and turns her around to face him.

THABO

What song were you singing when I came?

DAWETI

Njalo.

THABO

God! You are so morbid. I like that Mariam Makeba it was more upbeat.

Thabo starts to sing, and helps her with the  
coffin.

Come come, how does your part go?

Thabo sings Daweti's part badly.

DAWETI

You're making my ears bleed. It's more like this.

Daweti starts to sing her part, Thabo joins her.

THABO

Here put that in there.

Daweti goes to put the pillow in the coffin. When  
her back is to Thabo he lifts up the gun and  
points it at her.

THABO

Daweti.